

REMARKS

By the present amendment, Applicants have canceled Claims 1-20 and added Claims 21-25. Claims 21-25 remain pending in the present application. Claim 21 is an independent claim.

In the recent Office Action the Examiner objected to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a) and objected to the numbering of the original claims. Claims 1, 3-5, 7-11, 13-15 and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reale et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,871,405) in view of Sweeney et al. (U.S. Patent No. 2,954,808). Claims 2 and 12, and Claims 6 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reale et al. in view of Sweeney et al., in further view of Atkinson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,033,251) and Visco (U.S. Patent No. 3,987,542), respectively.

The cancellation of Claims 1-20 by the present amendment should serve to obviate the informalities noted of record with respect to the drawings and the misnumbering of the original claims. With regard to newly introduced Claims 21-25, Applicants will advance arguments herein below to illustrate the manner in which the invention defined by the present claims is patentably distinguishable from the cited and applied prior art. Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

New independent Claim 21 is directed towards a saw blade for a reciprocating power saw, comprising a flat mounting arm, a flat connector arm and a flat cutting blade of unitary construction. The mounting arm is characterized as having one end for attachment to the reciprocating saw and the opposite end integrally attached to the connector arm, wherein the connector arm and the mounting arm forms an angle of about 90°. The claimed cutting blade is integrally connected to the connector arm to form an angle of about 90° and includes at least one cutting edge defined by a plurality of teeth. The cutting blade is offset from the mounting arm by a distance substantially equal to the length of the connector arm, such that the cutting blade and the mounting arm are parallel to each other and extend in opposite directions from the connector arm. The claimed saw blade further includes at least one stabilizer attached to the mounting arm and the connector arm for providing additional support to the cutting blade. New dependent Claims 22 and 23 correspond substantially to original Claims 5 and 7 (*renumbered*), respectively. New dependent Claims 24 and 25 correspond substantially to original Claims 10 and 6 (*renumbered*), respectively.

Applicants contend that the patent to Reale et al., taken in combination with Sweeney et al. or combined with any of the other references cited of record, is insufficient to render the present invention obvious within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. 103 since the prior art relied upon of record fails to reasonably suggest a offset saw blade having the combination of structural and functional features as defined by the present claims.

The patent to Reale et al. discloses a reciprocating saw blade extension having one end attachable to a reciprocating saw and the opposite end removably attachable to a saw blade. The extension places the blade in a lateral offset orientation to allow for flush cuts. The end of the extension that is attachable to the saw blade has a structure that corresponds to the blade-receiving structure on the end of the drive shaft of a conventional reciprocating saw and requires a clamping plate to secure the blade to the extension. In contrast, Applicants' cutting blade is integrally and permanently attached to the connector arm such that the mounting arm, connector arm and cutting blade form a unitary construction. Applicants' rigid construction allows a greater reciprocating force to be exerted on the blade. This structural and functional feature of Applicants' claimed invention is neither disclosed nor remotely suggested by the primary reference to Reale et al.

The Examiner relies upon the patent to Sweeney et al. for its teaching that the angle between the blade and connecting arm, and the angle between the mounting arm and the connecting arm can be 90°. Notwithstanding, the secondary reference Sweeney et al. discloses an offset attachment for a reciprocating saw similar to that of the primary reference to Reale et al. in that the blade is removably attachable to one end of the offset attachment. The blade receiving end of Sweeney's offset attachment includes a slot configured to accommodate the end of the blade, which is secured in the slot by a locking bolt and nut. Since Sweeney neither discloses nor suggests Applicants' unitary construction, this secondary fails to supplement the noted deficiency of the primary reference to Reale et al.

The Examiner relies upon the patent to Atkinson et al. to show that the use of a cutting blade with two cutting edges is well known in the art. In this regard, Applicants are no longer specifically claiming a blade having a second cutting edge in order to obviate the drawing objection of record and avoid the requirement for corrected drawings.

The Examiner's reliance on the patent to Visco to show the use of a reinforcing rib attached to a mounting arm of a cutting blade is duly noted. However, the Visco reference is directed towards angular shears or scissors having a pivotal cutting action quite different from the reciprocating motion of Applicants' blade. Thus, Applicants contend that one skilled in the art would not be motivated or guided by the prior art to combine this non-analogous reference with either Reale et al. or Sweeney et al. in the manner suggested by the Examiner in order to arrive at the feature of Applicants' invention as now set forth in Claim 25.

Applicants contends that the primary reference to Reale et al. fails to disclose or suggest an offset saw blade of unitary construction for a reciprocating power saw, which structural arrangement constitutes an essential feature of Applicants' claimed invention. This deficiency of the primary reference is not remedied by the teachings afforded by the secondary references to Sweeney et al. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art without the benefit of Applicants' own disclosure would not be capable of arriving at the presently claimed invention in light of the separate teachings afforded by the

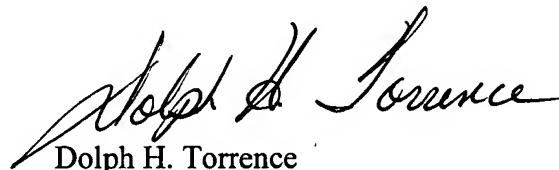
Application No. : 10/814,156
Art Unit : 3725

Attorney Docket No. 22349.00
Confirmation No. 7368

applied references or by combining the references in the manner suggested by the Examiner since none of the references cited or applied of record realistically suggests the essential combination of features that forms the basis of the instant claims.. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 21-25 are allowable over the prior art of record.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. If such is not the case, the Examiner is requested to kindly contact the undersigned in an effort to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dolph H. Torrence". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "T".

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